



**For Immediate Release
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FOREST PRODUCT HARVEST AT MARLBOROUGH STATE FOREST WILL IMPROVE FOREST HEALTH AND REMOVE HAZARDOUS TREES

The Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry – under the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) – will begin seeking bids from companies to harvest forest products from a portion of Marlborough State Forest, located off Concord Road in the city of Marlborough. The parcel that will be harvested abuts city-owned Ghiloni Park and ties into Marlborough's trail system.

While the city currently manages Marlborough State Forest (under a 1980 agreement), DCR still owns the land and retains forest management responsibility. DCR's decision to harvest from this parcel of land was made only after consulting with the city's Parks Department. "DCR has been working closely with and soliciting input from the City, making sure there is no conflict with their agreement to utilize the parcel," said DCR Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington.

DCR manages the state forests and parks according to "green certification" sustainability principles and standards of a well-managed forest. In April of 2004, state forests and parks were "green certified" by an independent third party audit team. "The proposed harvest at Marlborough State Forest will provide for the overall ecological health of the forest," added Burrington.

The proposed harvest is to take place on 40 of the 90 acres of the parcel in a forest stand consisting primarily of white pine. The white pine that forms the overstory of this stand was planted in 1920 as part of a reforestation program for land that had either been cut or abandoned after prior agricultural uses. Under the reforestation program, the state at that time would purchase the land and make improvements by way of reforestation and later allow the former owner to redeem the land for purchase price plus the cost of improvements. The parcel on Concord Road was not redeemed in the allotted timeframe and ownership was retained by the Commonwealth.

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Past forest management of the stand included thinning to allow remaining trees more room to grow and pruning to produce clear lumber. Today, many of the overstory trees are in poor and declining health, which necessitates the need for action to maintain the long-term health of the forest.

“The purpose of the harvest is to replace the unhealthy and declining forest over a period of time by releasing young healthy white pine trees that are well established in the understory,” explained Burrington. “Partially removing the older trees will give the young trees access to sunlight and room to grow.”

Additional details include:

- Approximately one-third of the overstory trees will be removed during this harvest with additional plans to remove many of the remaining overstory trees in one or two harvests commencing in 10 to 20 years.
- Trees with evidence of nesting and extensive wildlife will be retained, as will an adequate number of rotting and hollow trees that serve to provide for present and future wildlife needs.
- Many larger trees will be retained as legacy trees.
- Hazardous trees along trails and abutting residential property will be targeted wherever removal can be done safely.
- DCR plans to install two lockable steel gates at the entrances to the parcel as part of the proposed harvest. The gates will facilitate management and protection of the parcel and help prevent unauthorized motor vehicle entrance.

Massachusetts forest harvester license holders are eligible to bid on the harvesting contract. For additional information on the forest product harvesting project at Marlborough State Forest, contact DCR’s Forestry Bureau at 978-369-3350 ext. 19.

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